



THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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MEETING OF STATE AGENTS.

It is known by the brethren generally that there will be a conference of State business agents in the city of Dallas, Texas, on the second Tuesday in February, 1888, for the purpose of making a National application of the Macune agency system. Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Missouri, Louisiana and Texas will be represented.

The National Wheel, at its last meeting, recommended to their States that they elect at once their State agents. We hope to meet them all here in February.

The first question is: "Will it work?" The second, "is there any money in it?"

As to the first question, we go to record as saying that it is entirely feasible, eminently practicable. Suppose said National business agent is a broad-gauge man, thoroughly competent to grasp the subject in its widest, deepest and broadest proportions. Located at New Orleans, La., he can contract for the entire output of as many mills as will supply us with molasses, pay the Louisiana farmers more than they get now, and get it much cheaper than the farmers of other States can possibly get it under the present system. This is no guess-work. It has been thoroughly tested, and finally settled within thirty miles of here, by our Alliance Wheat-Milling Company paying more for wheat and selling flour cheaper. He can import our coffee by the ship load and prevent a repetition of a coffee corner. He can take the entire output of two or

three wagon, buggy and implement factories, of one prints mill of two or three Lowell mills, and so on through the list. He will get all these at lowest cash prices, with a heavy discount if paid in thirty days.

All the States are making assessments. Arkansas of 25 cents, Mississippi of \$1 per annum for five years, to furnish their agents with operating capital with which to make their purchases. This ought to be an eye-opener to any man who has belonged to the Alliance for over two weeks, and who holds his head to one side like a duck listening for thunder, as he naively asks what them ar fellers want with the \$2 assessment?

I wonder sometimes if they expect to revolutionize the mercantile world, and pull the universe out of ruts in which it has run for centuries with wind! and wishing they were rich. It takes money to trade! And if you expect your State agent to buy ten million dollars worth of goods with Wind & Wishes you will have to furnish a different quality from any that blows at Dallas.

It will take that amount to supply the Texas membership for 1888. A brother from Grimes county told us yesterday his county bought, in 1886, \$600,000 worth of goods on credit, and as much for cash. This makes at least \$1,000,000 worth for a county. Talk about a State agent buying goods and farm implements for 230 counties without a dollar capital!

The Texas brethren are responding grandly, and we expect by the time the plans and estimates are made for the Exchange building, (say by the first of January, 1888) that the Exchange Board will have an immense bank account.

We should be proud to see the State Alliance assemble in the new building next August.

Now, as to the second question, "Will it pay to have a National business agent?" After what I have already said this one sounds silly. Any ten-year-old boy knows it will be the biggest paying interest ever made. He can buy lower than any wholesale house in America. He can get lower rates of transportation. He will work for a salary, and the order will get all the profits of the business, which ought to be simply immense.

The Texas Exchange has been, and is today, a Grand Success! It has saved more than a million dollars to the brotherhood already.

Cotton has sold better all over the State on account of the mere existence of the Exchange, and if I were at liberty to tell you of astonishingly favorable sales made here it would fairly take your breath. This has all been done with new men, without experience, in a novel and new way of doing business. What may we reasonably expect next year?—*Southern Mercury.*

SUCCESSFUL FARMING.

Here is a case of successful farming for you: Thomas Eaton, colored, who lives on the lands belonging to the estate of the late H. H. Burwell, in this county, works two horses and no labor but his own family, and made last year eighteen bales of cotton averaging over 500 pounds each, 155 1-2 barrels of corn, 100 bushels of wheat, and a large quantity of fodder, oats, &c. This shows what industry can accomplish in this country, even by a colored man.—*Henderson Gold Leaf.*

Says Prof. Stewart: "The advantage of grinding the cob and the corn together, is not altogether in the nutriment of the cob, but because the cob, being a coarser and spongy material, gives bulk and divides and separates the fine meal, so as to allow a free circulation of the gastric juice through the mass in the stomach. Corn meal when wet into plastic dough, is very solid and easily penetrated by any liquid; and when pigs are fed wholly on corn meal they often suffer with fever in the stomach, because the meal lies there too long undigested."—*The Farmer's Home.*

FARMERS SHOULD HAVE SOME INTERESTS BESIDE FARMING.

In the present generation, when the needs of people, or at least the wants, are so much greater than formerly; when a house built of logs, furnished with home-made furniture, home-spun clothes and home-grown food are not good enough for us, it is absolutely that the interests of every part of the country should be diversified. One hundred years ago farmers wanted so little that even if crops were a comparative failure, or if prices were extremely low, it made but little difference. They spun and wove their own clothes from the backs of their own sheep; they got their supplies of sugar from the maples in the woods; they made their own bread and meat, they wore moccasins made of raw-hide. They wanted little, and had enough and were healthy and happy.

Now we want many things it takes money to get. We must pay heavy taxes and spend money for a thousand things our fathers never even dreamed of. So we must arrange our matters so that whether crops fail or not we can always have some money with which to meet these necessities. It is necessary then, in order to be sure of some income to arrange for some other source of it than the regular staple crops that have been customarily grown. Any one who has traveled much has noticed that those sections are always most prosperous which depend for their income on a variety of crops. In this respect a farming community is exactly a city or town. If that depends on any one industry for its growth and prosperity, whether it is manufacturing, mining, or the agricultural interests, it will often have pinching times.

In all human affairs failure is always probable. So if one thing fails, it is well to have something else to fall back on. This principle is universally recognized by the farmers in the northern half of this country, but it is ignored in the southern half. In the North no farmer depends on just one or two crops, except in some portions of the northwest. Every farmer calculates to make money out of his regular crops of grain, such as corn, wheat, oats, barley; then he has his potatoes, his fruit, his poultry, his milk and butter, his cattle and hogs and probably an occasional colt. Then in a great many neighborhoods there are canning establishments, jelly factories and other things of that kind which make a good market for vegetables and fruits, all that can be grown.

It is to this last subject that we wish especially to call the attention of farmers. In cold and sterile Maine there are a large number of packing establishments, from which are sent out to all parts of the country thousands of tons of canned goods, especially corn. All over New England, in New York, New Jersey, Maryland and some States farther west, there are hundreds of canning establishments which purchase all sorts of fruits and vegetables that are grown by the farmers. Many of these are owned by the farmers themselves. Now since the consumption of all these goods is enormous in the West, and since all the fruits and vegetables grow as well or better in the West than the East, why cannot the farmers of the West undertake to develop this industry. There might be a thousand canning establishments in the State of Missouri alone, and the agricultural prosperity of the State will never be firmly established until there is thus created a permanent demand at home for some of the crops the farmers can grow.

As the capital required is small and as the machinery and process are simple, we really see no reason why canneries should not be built and operated by farmers. Of one thing they may feel perfectly assured, there will be ready sale for the goods if they are good.

In Botetourt county, Va., there are a number of successful canneries. A gentleman in that county, who is well informed on the subject, thus gives the

cost of a small establishment. It is worthy of thoughtful perusal:

The capacity of the fixtures herein described is adapted to a "small cannery." The boiler, with one kettle, would prepare enough of tomatoes, etc., to fill 3600 cans, or three times this number of peaches or apples. Every additional kettle would proportionately increase the capacity.

The cost of a boiler of 12-horse power is \$220; kettle, open \$17. This will do for tomatoes, apples, peaches and all kinds of berries.

If corn or peas are to be canned a patent process will be necessary. This will cost \$225. With this kettle you will have a set of cranes.

Leaving out this we have the following additional items. Open kettle and cranes, extra, cost \$6 to \$8; exhaust box, \$17; crane, to hoist crates out of the kettle, \$13; air pump, \$6; oil tank, \$8 to \$25; free pots, \$8 to \$10; Debow capping tools, \$2 each. Two of these will be necessary for each man, but one "capper" is sufficient in a small cannery.

The prices of cans, if they are bought at the right time, are for two-pond cans \$2.45 to \$3 per hundred.

The cases of boxes in which the cans are packed for shipment, and which hold two dozen cans, cost for cases that hold twenty-four 2-pond cans 7c each; for cases that hold twenty-four 3-pond cans 9c each.

The price paid for shelling peas is 5c per gallon; for peeling tomatoes 1c per bucket, that is, the common wooden bucket; for peeling and seeding peaches, 12c per bushel; peeling apples, 10c per bushel. These are the prices when the hands are boarded at the cannery. If they board themselves \$1.50 per day is allowed.

In the foregoing statement of expenses of starting a cannery nothing is said about a house to cover the machinery and operations. This may be a very plain cheap shed, or a more costly building, or some old building may be adapted to the purpose. A house with an area of floor equivalent to 24x40 feet would be sufficient. Leaving out the cost of the house and the process kettle, necessary if corn and peas are to be canned, the sum of \$325 will, I am informed, cover the expenses of starting a cannery for tomatoes, peaches, apples and all kinds of berries.—*St. Louis Journal of Agriculture and Stock Breeder.*

BRITAIN'S SHRINKING GRAIN AREA.

The *Edinburg Farming World* calls attention to the fact that in sixteen harvests the annual wheat crop of the United Kingdom has shrunk from 3,981,989 acres in 1867 to 2,553,092 acres in 1885, which it is said, means that the bread corn produce of 1,583,671 acres, which may average 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 quarters per annum, has to be replaced by importation.

This large deficit, to be made up by increased purchase from abroad, would not appear of such great consequence (in the present possible position of possible supply) if the acres abstracted from home wheat production were devoted to the growth of other corn, which might still maintain an equal force of manual labor on the same land. But in the period of sixteen years the reduction of the wheat area has been accompanied by a shrinkage of the total corn area of the United Kingdom, yielding wheat, barley, bere, [Scottish for a species of barley.—Ed.] rye, oats, peas and beans, from 12,000,111 acres in 1869 to 10,014,625, being a loss of 1,985,486 acres, or 16.5 per cent. This vast acreage has disappeared from the annual breadth which employs the greatest number of laborers per acre. Taking England alone, we find that fully one-seventh of the country has gone out of grain cultivation, while in Wales the proportion of grain culture sacrificed is still greater, and in Ireland considerably more than a quarter of the whole grain-growing area is lost.—*Farm, Field and Stockman.*

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SORGHUM SUGAR A SUCCESS.

The manufacture of sugar from sorghum is a practical success. It is bound to open up a new industry. Many branches of farming that are now over-crowded can go into the sorghum sugar business, thus relieving over-production in other lines at a profit to the whole country. This will retain in the country the 100 millions of dollars that are now annually sent abroad to purchase our sugar supply, a sum that will be doubled in 25 years at the present rate of development. The practical success of sugar manufacture at Fort Scott, Kansas, is beyond question. Capital is ready and eager to go into the new business. Hundreds of factories would be started if competent managers could be secured. For lack of competent managers many mistakes will be made, as farmers and capitalists will rush into the business without knowing how it ought to be conducted. Congress may build factories in some of the States for the purpose of educating men to manage this new business. I am satisfied that South of 39 degrees of latitude sorghum mills will be as common as flour mills, for they do not cost any more, for \$25,000 to \$30,000 will build a mill capable of making from 15,000 to 20,000 pounds of sugar from sorghum daily. This is a promising work for the experiment stations to take hold of. The chemistry of sugar should be taught in all the colleges and stations.—*Norman J. Colman, Commissioner of Agriculture, in Farm and Home.*

WHERE IS THE PROFIT?

Is there any profit in keeping hogs over winter to get more weight when killed? How much corn does it take to keep up the animal heat of one pig through the winter, to say nothing about the feed necessary to produce a slow growth? When we consider that the feed is first used as fuel and the residue to promote growth, we shall see there is a great deal of feed used, which in the summer, if fed to spring pigs, would make pork. I think three spring pigs bought the last of April can be kept with no more expense than two through the winter. They will aggregate as much weight with more desirable hams and shoulders and less lard in those parts where the lean is wished. Few people have stomachs able to digest much of those immense masses of lard which weigh from 300 to 600 pounds and are the boast of so many farmers at this season.—*E. N. Hawley, Fairfield Co., Co., in Farm and Home.*

It is recorded of a certain great philosopher that a friend who sent to visit him met the philosopher's little daughter before he met the philosopher himself. Knowing that the father was such a deeply learned man, he thought that the little girl must have learned something very grave, something very deep, from such a father, and he said to her, "What is your father teaching you?" The little maid looked at him with her clear blue eyes, and just said, "Obedience." That was what the great and wise man taught his little girl, and I believe that is the most important lesson for children to learn, "to be obedient." It is a lesson necessary for their happiness, for their safety, and I think I may say, for their life.—*Conan Wynne*

OFFICIAL ORGANS OF FARMERS ALLIANCE.

National Alliance—*Southern Mercury*, Dallas, Texas.
Alabama—*Alliance News*, Calera.
Arkansas—*State Wheel Enterprise*, Little Rock.
Mississippi—*The Farmer*, Winona.
North Carolina—*THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER*, Raleigh.
Louisiana—*The Union*, Choudrant.
Tennessee and Kentucky—*The Toiler*, Union City, Tenn.
Free Speech, Beaumont, Texas, of the counties of Jefferson, Orange, Tyler, Hardin, Chambers, Liberty.
Florida—*Farmers' Florida Alliance*.